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BY HANNAH MARIA PRESTON CODDING; WITH AN INTRO-
DUCTION BY JOSEPH HENRY CROOKER

[From Proceedings of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1897]

MADISON
STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF WISCONSIN
1898



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INTRODUCTION.

BY JOSEPH HENRY CROOKER.

During a residence of ten years in Madison, it was my lot to travel extensively, on various errands over the State of Wisconsin. In these travels, I found myself treading in the footsteps of Ichabod Coddington. It was seldom that I visited a village or city without making the acquaintance of men and women who spoke, with the fervor of intense affection, of this heroic apostle of righteousness. Though twenty years had then passed since his death, and forty years since his first work in this Commonwealth, still, among his numerous friends, I found his memory fresh and his name not only revered, but associated with all things that make for the better life.

The impression which Mr. Coddington made upon people was peculiarly strong, permanent, and ennobling. The enthusiasm which he evoked, the affection which he inspired, the influence which he exerted, were very remarkable. He took hold of people in a masterly manner; I never met in connection with any one else, such evidences of personal devotion. Very touching to me were the displays of deep feeling on the part of his friends, as they showed me old letters and pictures as if the relics of a saint — as indeed they were. It has been my good fortune to converse with many persons who knew him; and, as a rule, I have noted that, before they had talked very long, tears filled their eyes and emotion choked their voices. This, too, I have seen with hard-headed business and professional men, not given to sentimentalism. Mr. Coddington must have been a man of striking personality, to have impressed people so deeply; and I gladly put on record this testimony to the wide

scope and intense character of his personal influence. It was a wide-reaching influence for good, upon large multitudes. Testimony to this interesting fact is also borne by such well-known men as Parker Pillsbury, Charles K. Whipple, Oliver Johnson, and others, in letters to me in reference to Mr. Coddington, with whom they labored. — letters which, unfortunately, I cannot produce here.

Ichabod Coddington deserves more fame than he has received. As will be seen from this interesting memoir, he was a pioneer in the temperance reform, almost a martyr to the cause; he was a powerful preacher of rational Christianity, when dogmatism was very narrow and intolerance was very bitter; but most of all, he was an eloquent, untiring, and courageous advocate of the abolition of slavery, at the very dawn of that great movement. An early associate of Garrison, a co-laborer with Chase, a fellow-worker with Lincoln, it does seem a little strange that his name should have been so soon forgotten. If, like his friend Lovejoy, he had died earlier at the hands of a mob; if his later work had been farther East, nearer the centers of publicity; or if he had lived twenty years longer, his name would probably now be widely known. For Mr. Coddington was in many ways a great man. Many good judges of oratory, who have heard all our noted speakers, have told me that, in persuasiveness, few equaled him and none surpassed him. He had marvelous success in captivating an adverse audience. Many have told me that, as young men, they went with others to break up his meetings and mob him, but became converts long before he closed speaking. The work that he did as temperance advocate, as editor, as apostle of human rights, and as preacher, was large and fruitful.

The following biographical sketch was written in 1880-81, by his widow, Hannah Maria Preston Coddington, who died in 1881. It is an interesting chapter in a most interesting history of a great struggle. Some parts of it are especially thrilling. I am glad that this story of his life is to find a place in the publications of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin. The facts of his later years are not given here as fully as they ought to be described. For nearly a score of years before his death,

Mr. Coddington spent a large part of his time in this State; and he contributed mightily to every great and noble interest of this Commonwealth. It was in Baraboo that the last six years of his life were passed, as pastor of the Unitarian church; it is there that his memory is greenest, there that his friends most abound. The Free Congregational Church of that city was erected as a memorial to him. The name of Coddington was once on the lips of applauding multitudes; it was greeted far and wide with great enthusiasm; it was associated with deep moral earnestness in behalf of suffering humanity. His name may well be preserved by the State Historical Society among the honored worthies of Wisconsin.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.

BY HANNAH MARIA PRESTON CODDINGTON.

The commission given by the British crown to Sir William Coddington as governor of Rhode Island (dated 1650), also his ancient coat of arms, and a portrait of himself, are now in the state house at Providence, R. I. Ichabod Coddington¹ was his descendant in the eighth generation. He was born September 23, 1810, in Bristol, Ontario county, New York, to which place his parents had removed as pioneers from Massachusetts. He was the fifth child,—having three brothers and one sister, all of whom lived to maturity. His father, Faunce Coddington, a sturdy, noble character, fell victim to a malignant fever, dying July 29, 1810—three months before the birth of this son, whom the mother, in her sore anguish and bereavement, named Ichabod. “for,” said she, “the glory is departed.” Her widowhood of sixty years attested her devotion to the memory of her husband. Her family name was Andrews.

This mother was remarkable not only for her tenderness, but for energy, strong common-sense, intellectual vigor, and originality,—as well as for patriotic love to her country, and pride in

¹ The syllable *ton*, in the family name, was dropped about the year 1700.

its history. She carefully instilled this into the tender minds of her children, by oft-repeated tales of the Revolutionary time and war, when at evening the broken circle gathered round the broad and kindly hearth. Her intelligence and faithfulness also made up to them the deficiency of school advantages. She possessed a fund of wit and humor, a brilliant fancy, and dramatic power, which were all turned to account in the training of her fatherless children. Though poverty narrowed their opportunities on all sides, their minds were developed, and stored with useful knowledge; their sympathies broadened and deepened; self-control, industry, and usefulness, were made habitual; the divine law was reverently taught them as the rule of life; and religion was regarded as living according to that law, rather than as assent to any creed.

Ichabod's early boyhood was marked by uncommon energy and physical activity. He took pride in lifting the heaviest weights, in running the swiftest races, and in all feats of strength and agility. In wrestling with a lad older than himself, his knee was dislocated; and a long confinement followed, in which his love of activity turned heartily to learning. With the help of his mother, he acquired the elements of a good education, and became conversant with many books, with the contents and peculiarities of which he entertained and amused his mates, with a rare charm of manner,—to the delight of his mother, whose joy it was to see, as she did, his opening promise. Responding day by day to her simple, wholesome, and practical teaching, and under the pure influence of a mother's and a sister's love, he seems to have been baptized, even while yet a boy, with the spirit of philanthropy, and to have entered upon his noble career as a reformer.

At the age of seventeen years, seeing the evils of intemperance (though ignorant of the great temperance movement at the East), he drew up a pledge of total abstinence, and won many of his young comrades to its support. His first temperance lecture, given at that time, is still in possession of his family. In its delivery, he evinced the germ of that power in the expression of moral truth, which so distinctly marked his life. Full of enthusiasm, he went into the surrounding country a

young apostle of temperance, and, before he had reached the age of twenty-one years, he had given a hundred temperance lectures. In one of these early lectures, now extant, he took the radical ground that intemperance is a sin against God, and must be seen as such and forsaken, before any permanent or real reform can be effected in the man; also that the liquor traffic — being an efficient cause of ultimate ruin to the mind, body, and soul of those who partake, in sapping the foundation of morals, and endangering the permanence of our institutions — has no real right to the protection of law, the object of which should be the welfare of all. To this very level, popular sentiment in our country is now rapidly rising.

At the age of twenty years, when, by the power of divine truth, spiritual life became to him a conscious reality, its lofty claims were so heartily acknowledged that he made the most self-sacrificing efforts to live them out, — in the smallest matters endeavoring to shun every evil, and limiting himself to the most simple and inexpensive dress and living, that he might "let his light shine." Soon after this time, Mr. Coddington entered the academy at Canandaigua, New York, to prepare for college; he there gave instruction in the English department, as a means of paying his way. Stephen A. Douglas was his fellow student at that time. Three years later, Mr. Coddington entered Middlebury College, Vermont. It was here that the sad story of the American slave reached his ear, and stirred the deep fountains of his tender and compassionate soul. The country was beginning to shake with excitement on the subject, and he could not hush his manly sympathies and be silent. Accordingly he gained permission during his junior year, from the faculty of the college, to go out for a few weeks and plead the cause of the slave.

This was his initiation into the distinctive work of his life; his earliest consecration to the cause of liberty. He soon found himself engaged in no holiday service. Furious mobs howled on his track; the doors of public halls and churches were closed against him; priests and politicians, saints and sinners, all joined in fraternal sympathy, and vied with each other to silence the young Wilberforce. The faculty of the college took fright, lest its reputation should suffer from the unpopularity of such

a disturber of the peace of slavery, and represented that he was a truant from college duties. Learning, on his return, what had been done to disgrace him, he went to the authorities of the college, and brought them to own the falsehood and to retract the censure. But although restored to regular standing, his wounded spirit forced him to abandon the college where he had been so cruelly and basely treated.

He had entered college with the purpose of becoming a minister of the gospel, and of going as a missionary to foreign lands; but when he saw how the wail of enslaved millions in our own land was received by the churches of Christ,—how men professing to be followers of the merciful Jesus grew pale with rage or fear at the base story of the slave's wrongs,—he, though but a youth, saw that their influence helped to rivet the chains of slavery upon his fellow-men, and he changed his purpose. His work—his life-work—was at his door.

Now he girded himself for the great anti-slavery conflict. With Theodore D. Weld he spent a whole night in prayer for divine help, to make the full consecration of all his powers to the sacred cause, and for guiding wisdom all the way. With this spirit of loyalty to God and love to humanity, he enlisted in the service of the American Anti-Slavery Society, which had just then entered the field.

In a letter to his sister, Mrs. H. S. Mason, dated Middlebury, Vermont, August 22, 1836, he says:

I am engaged to the American Anti Slavery Society as a public lecturer. I feel that I am engaged in a noble, a holy, enterprise. I really feel, from my heart, unworthy to plead the cause of three millions of my poor down-trodden, imbruted fellow men. But when the mighty champions of Israel do not dare to go forth to meet this modern more than Goliath, if it please the Almighty, a far less than the boy David will take his sling and stone, and go forth to meet him, in the full assurance that he who inspires his heart will direct it to the monster's head. It is an inspiring subject. It is enough to entalent the talentless, to give spirit to the spiritless. I expect to meet with opposition, perhaps with mob-violence; but is it not good to say to all,

" Arise for the forsaken slave !
Upon your God for courage call,
And in his strength go forth to save."

About this time, 1836, Zebina Eastman (now resident in

Chicago, who was consul to England during the term of President Lincoln) heard Mr. Coddington in Jamaica, on the east side of the Green mountains, in one of his earliest speeches in this cause. He says:

Learning that an anti-slavery lecturer was to speak in the old, antique meeting house, I went. It was filled, crowded. The man who came into the pulpit with the venerable minister, and who filled it that day, was Ichabod Coddington. His picture is distinctly in my mind, though it is forty-five years ago, as he stood there, his face radiant with smiles, humor and vivacity. * * * Young Coddington did his work well. He brought out the "Bible argument" in a clear, logical manner, quoting passage after passage to clinch every argument. I was never so interested in a sermon. The audience was held in perfect control by his chain of evidence and fluent utterance; for even at that early time he manifested that remarkable eloquence and power as an orator which, afterwards, so often stirred the people of the Western prairies. The next week, I met him at Fayetteville, Vt., where with a faithful few he held a convention. Oscar L. Shafter (since chief justice of California, then a law-student and an abolitionist) was there. The president of the convention was the venerable Charles Phelps, uncle of Gen. Phelps. Amos Dresser was there, and told his story of being publicly whipped in Nashville, Tenn., the year before,—because some anti-slavery papers were found in his trunk, and because he had been a student at Lane Seminary, of which Dr. Lyman Beecher was president. Mr. Coddington made the main speech. It was a portraiture of slavery, the sum of all sin and crime—its cruelties, its violation of natural and civil rights, and the responsibility of the North in the matter. He answered the question so often put then, "Why don't you go South and preach?"

In a letter, also to his sister, written two years later, Mr. Coddington says: "It is not only a necessity, but a very great privilege, to defend the principle of natural equal rights, which is fast gaining ground in the North. The principles of abolition are destined to triumph. I don't know how long the Lord will have me labor in this particular vineyard. It may be till every yoke is broken and the oppressed go free."

For five years, he traveled the States of Vermont, Massachusetts, Maine, Connecticut, and New York—giving himself with all the ardor of his being to pleading the cause of the dumb, and forewarning the people of coming judgments, if oppression should be persisted in, with a heroism and eloquence that has

never been surpassed. It was in the second year of this service that Elijah P. Lovejoy was shot—a martyr to the freedom of the press. Mr. Coddington writes:

I was in Massachusetts, with lecture in hand, when a note was handed me, saying "Lovejoy is murdered by an Alton mob!" My lecture dropped from my hand. I had watched with deep solicitude the proceedings at Alton, and was not wholly unprepared for such news. Yet I have no power now, nor had I then, to portray the effect it produced upon me. I felt the inspiration of my departed brother, the martyr spirit, stirring within me, and I swore eternal fidelity to the cause of human rights: and forgetting my lecture, gave myself to the inspiration of the hour; and vindicated the right of freedom of speech as God-given, and older than human constitutions and human laws, yet in our country secured in both.

With this fresh consecration, he began his work in Massachusetts. On the opening of his first meeting in Brighton, on a Sunday evening, while offering prayer, two strong men seized and dragged him down from the pulpit into the aisle, and were only prevented from delivering him to the mob outside, by two young men of the audience, who had known him in college. They released him, and compelled the intruders to listen to one anti-slavery lecture. In 1838, he went to Maine and had the honor of addressing the legislature of that State for three hours, on the "Texas question." It was one of his great speeches, and resulted in the practical conversion of more than forty of the legislators to the principles he advocated. In Brunswick, Maine, he was mobbed. In Calais, where he advertised to give a course of anti-slavery lectures, the more violent of the opposition called a meeting of the people to warn him out of town; Mr. Coddington attended their meeting, demanded the right to be heard on the resolutions against him, met and defeated each one, and so won upon the people by his gallant and manly defense, that he gave the course of lectures to attentive audiences, without molestation.

Mr. Coddington established and edited the *Advocate of Freedom*, the first anti-slavery journal in Maine, and laid the foundation of the Liberty party in that State. In 1839, he accepted an invitation to Connecticut. Here he labored three years, with great power and success, winning, as he always did, lifelong friends and admirers. He established the *Christian Free-*

man (afterward called the *Republican*, and edited by William H. Burleigh).

In May, 1843, he came to Illinois to visit his aged mother, whose home was with his sister at Gooding's Grove, Will county. Between this brother and sister there existed, during his whole life, the most affectionate sympathy and confidence with the utmost harmony of views. Their religious experiences had run on almost parallel lines, and the broad applications of the divine law to all human relations, which he now so convincingly taught, met the heartiest response in her whole family of seven sons — one of whom, George H. Mason, gave his life, in the full martyr spirit, to the sacred cause of freedom, in the war. Mr. Coddington had not purposed to remain longer than a few weeks in Illinois. But the great West was spread out before him; his nearest relatives were here; and very soon we find him (June 15, 1843) present at the sixth anniversary meeting of the Illinois State Anti-Slavery Society, which was framed after the martyrdom of Elijah P. Lovejoy. After the adjournment of the meeting, there was held a meeting of the Liberty party for the Fourth Congressional district, which then embraced the whole northern part of the State. The *Western Citizen* of that date says: "While the committee were making up their report, the convention was addressed in a most eloquent and soul-stirring speech from Ichabod Coddington, from Connecticut."

Z. Eastman (editor of the *Western Citizen*, the anti-slavery organ for the northwest at that time), Dr. C. V. Dyer, James H. Collins, L. C. P. Freer, and indeed all who were earnestly in sympathy with the movement for freedom, were unanimous in the effort to have him remain in the West, desiring to add him to the force of lecturers already in the field in Illinois, who were Rev. Chauncey Cook (father of Hon. B. C. Cook), William T. Allen, John Cross, and H. St. Clair. He remained in Chicago, and gave a number of lectures in the old, long, low building of the First Presbyterian Church. He carefully informed himself of the state of parties, of public feeling, and of personal relations to the movement, and was thus enabled to make the most pungent applications of principles, and in a very direct and forcible manner, to the exact conditions; so that he was

credited with remarkable insight. A figure he used, of the state of public men floating on the tide of public opinion (which many who heard him will recall), illustrates his piquant way of touching his subject: "The fish that moves so gracefully and with such dignity in its course, headed *down stream*, the admiration of all beholders, is a *dead* fish! The others, that flutter and splurge, and spatter the water about, are *alive*. It takes a *live* fish to move against the stream." With true psychologic power, he made every auditor see the picture in his mind—and the writer has seen the audience, as one person, look down to see the floating stream, the gracefully moving fish, and the splurging, dashing, *living* one; and the impression made, of the difference between a dead apathy and a living sympathy, was never to be effaced.

Under the head "Mr. Coddington," the *Citizen* of July 5, 1843, announced: "This devoted and talented lecturer has been engaged for a few weeks to talk to the people about liberty. He will make them feel it is worth as much now as when Patrick Henry said, 'Give me liberty or give me death;' and that it is as hard to be taxed millions now to support the system of slavery, as in 1776 to pay a few pence on a pound of tea, to support the British monarchy." He commenced at St. Charles, Kane county, on the 11th of July. In a notice of this meeting,—of which the venerable Isaac Preston (whose daughter Mr. Coddington subsequently married) was chairman,—it was stated: "The meeting was addressed in a very impressive manner by Mr. Coddington, and after making its nominations adjourned until evening, to the Universalist church, where a large audience listened to an effective speech from the same speaker." Here was the beginning of this first canvass of the State. He traveled from county to county, visiting and speaking in all the larger towns.

The *Western Citizen* of July 30 contained the following account of a mass meeting of the people of Lake county:

Mr. Coddington spoke for about five hours, in his eloquent and forcible manner. The mass of facts he presented in reference to the encroachments of the slave power and the *cost* of slavery to the free laborers of the North, who have nothing to do with it actually, astonished his hearers, and set

many of them upon a course of reflection and study which will lead them out of the fog cast around them by the chief men and rulers of the nation that had virtually repudiated the first of the rights of man,—personal liberty!

In company with John A. Henderson (the Liberty party candidate for congress, in opposition to "Long" John Wentworth) and Owen Lovejoy, he visited and held meetings in La Salle, Putnam, and Bureau counties. Into the middle and southern parts of the State, where no abolition lecturer had been,—where they were looked upon as traitors to the country, as plotters against the public peace, as outlaws and violators of the criminal code; and ranked with counterfeiter and horse-thieves,—they went. Mr. Coddington was mobbed at Peoria, at McDonough, at Springfield, and at other places, serving in a cause that brought him neither thanks nor dollars, but hatred and scorn instead. It was of such heroes, of that cause and time, that Theodore Parker (whose work for human freedom had never been discounted) said:

They win hard fare and hard toil. They lay up shame and obloquy. Theirs is the most painful of martyrdoms. Racks and faggots soon waft the soul to God; stern messengers, but swift, a boy could bear that passage. But the temptation of a long life of scorn and reproach, and want, and desertion of false friends,—to live blameless, though blamed, cut off from human sympathy,—that is the martyrdom of to-day. In another age, men shall be proud of these Puritans and Pilgrims of this day. Churches shall glory in their names, and celebrate their praise in sermon and in song.

We are permitted to quote from *Personal Reminiscences of Ichabod Coddington*, by Z. Eastman, as follows:

In the spring of 1844, Mr. Coddington made with me the journey (overland, this was before the days of railroads) from Chicago to Cincinnati, to attend the great Liberty convention. It was at this convention that Chief Justice Chase delivered his great speech on the political aspects of the slave question, which had a powerful influence in molding the future action of the party, and in drawing large numbers to its support, and placed Mr. Chase fairly on the line which carried him to success as a politician on the side of the negro. The convention was held in the Millerite "tabernacle" (a building extemporized for the grand crisis then expected by that sect). There were three thousand present,—men and women of sterling stuff, mainly from Indiana and Ohio,—some from Pennsylvania, a few from Kentucky, and even from Virginia.

There were mutterings of mob violence upon this assemblage, and there was a feeling with all — hardly one escaped it — that it was best to be prudent in expression. There was, however, no keeping back the usual topics of discussion among Abolitionists, as to the sinfulness of slavery and the necessity of carrying the question to the ballot-box. A very exciting question then was, as to the duty of addressing the slaves, and advising them how to make their escape, and to take from their masters whatever was necessary to make their escape, whether it be clothing, horse, or boat. The teaching of the Cincinnati Abolition press, and the feeling of most of the Abolitionists, was that the "stealing question," as it was called, had best not be meddled with.

Mr. Codding was not known in Cincinnati, even by name. The cause at the East, where he had lived, had a glory of its own; Ohio had another lustre; and the West, about Chicago, had no reputation at all. For a person like Mr. Codding to hail from Chicago, was like being without credentials. One of the topics which it was generally admitted would not be discussed, was this "right to steal." The Abolitionists of Cincinnati, so near the line, and having so many fugitives from just across the border, had many burdens to bear, and it is not strange they did not desire to take up any other that might grow out of a moral question gotten up at Peterboro by Gerrit Smith. There will be in every assembly of three thousand, at least one or two imprudent and thoughtless persons. There was one such in this Liberty convention in Cincinnati, and this one applied the match to the train. A resolution was introduced bearing upon the right to communicate with the slave upon the plantation. There was some shrinking from the issue, and the introduction of the resolution was deprecated at that particular time. Mr. Codding seized an opportunity to utter a few sentences from his seat in the audience; his voice rang out, clear as a bell. He was called to the platform, amid cries of "Who is he?" The chairman informed the audience that it was Mr. Codding of Illinois.

Mr. Chase was upon the platform, holding the ponderous manuscript of his great address; there also were Samuel Lewis, Edward Smith, John G. Fee, Gamaliel Bailey (editor of the *National Era*), and other prominent men from Kentucky and Virginia. Mr. Codding said: "I have a few words to utter in behalf of a class of people suffering great affliction, in bondage, and subject to all the cruelties and wrongs which all captive people suffer. And we know what the judgment of all humanity is toward such a class, and what our feelings and conscience allow for them when they attempt to escape, — that they avail themselves of every means within their reach even to the taking of property and life. I have a brother captured by the Indians on the Western plains. He is made subject to that barbarous race, half starved, cruelly treated, — his life even, in peril, — and cut off forever from the companionship of his friends and relatives, from father, mother, wife and children. What shall my brother do? And what

shall I do for him? Shall I send him no word of advice or sympathy? Shall he, because he is a captive, be placed beyond my sympathy or aid, or even my voice, if I can by any means reach him? You all say no! 'Speak to your brother if he can hear you; call to him to flee for his life. Tell him that you and all his fellow-kind will not only assist and shelter him when he shall flee to you, but you will even fly to his rescue. Send him a letter or a word in any way that will reach him,—send it by a carrier-pigeon, or by a spy, or a savage of the same tribe that has captured him,—and tell him of the route he should take; what points he should make in his flight, at what fort he may find protection, and where he will find friends waiting to receive him; tell him not to stand upon the order of his going, but to flee at once.' And you say to him, 'Take the rifle of the Indian to defend yourself with. Smite down the first savage who attempts to arrest your flight. Take your captor's pony, and don't stop to ask questions, nor pay for it, even if you are charged with stealing; if your horse drops under you, take the next one you can capture. If you come to a river you must cross, if you can find a boat, take it,—steal it, if you must, to get away. Take anything, do anything to escape from your captivity with the savages. The world justifies you—for liberty is worth more to you than life itself.' Who would not give just such advice as this to a brother in captivity to the Indians? Who is there here who would not give just such advice to any person, brother or not, held a prisoner by the Indians? Who would not glory in aiding such a one to escape if he could, and protecting and feeding and sheltering and defending him from the savages who would recapture him? You know if you did not do it the civilized public would spurn you, and say you were as bad or worse than the savages themselves. Now, are you not bound to do the same to the black man as to any other, white or yellow? You would even protect one Indian fleeing from another,—would you not do this, and give the same advice to a black slave just across the river in Kentucky, as you would to one of your own race a captive on the Western plains? 'In as much as ye have not done it unto one of the least of these'—just over the Ohio river—'ye have not done it unto me.'"

This is but a feeble outline of a speech of fifteen minutes, that he poured out in a torrent of eloquence when he first ascended the platform, without preface, without allusion to the resolution or question in debate. The audience was spellbound. There was throughout the thousands seated on the closely-ranged benches, and standing on every foot of open space, the silence almost as of death. All eyes were fixed upon the speaker, and every mind open and eager to catch every word he uttered. His voice was clear and musical, and could be heard in its lowest tones to the most distant parts of the house; and he spoke with an energy and telling gesture that gave new force to every sentiment. It was a scene of sublime interest. There was after the delivery of that short speech, but one opinion,—

the reverse of the one held when he began,—that, at whatever cost or peril, the black fugitive from slavery should be aided and sheltered, as any other captive fleeing from oppression. This was one of the most magnificent triumphs of oratory I ever listened to.

The late Chief Justice Chase, some years after, speaking to me of Mr. Codding, said: "I have heard Webster, Clay, and most of the great orators of this country, but none of them could equal Codding, and I regard him as the greatest of orators. When I say 'greatest orator,' I wish to qualify the expression. Many may be ranked higher by the usual standards; but by the standard which after all should measure the power of oratory,—that of effect produced upon a large and promiscuous audience,—Codding surpassed any speaker I ever heard." He then alluded to the speech at the great Liberty convention at Cincinnati. He said: "The effect produced, and the transformation of opinion which followed, was far beyond any conception I ever had of the power of oratory. But a part of the result, doubtless, was due to the fact that he was right, and had the reason and the conscience of the people with him." I have given literally Mr. Chase's own words.

We may here add—what Mr. Eastman did not know—that Mr. Chase verified this estimate of Mr. Codding at the time, by offering him a full partnership in his law practice as an advocate, with a guarantee of \$5,000 per annum from the first. No more promising career could have been opened to him, nor one in which his gift of oratory would find a wider range; but in entering it he would in some degree turn away from the appeal of the enslaved, and the goal of his desire. He weighed the values on either side in the "philosopher's scales," and his services were "retained" for all the oppressed. Mr. Codding was engaged by the anti-slavery men of Ohio to speak in all the larger towns. At Dayton (the home of Vallandigham), his speeches caused much commotion, and exhibition of mob supremacy over law. With Hon. Joshua R. Giddings, he canvassed the northern part of Ohio. After his return to Illinois, he again made a lecturing tour of that State. The mob spirit was rife in many places, and he was often under the strain of severe provocation and trial; but he was always master of himself, and consequently of his position. This power of self-mastery, which made him cool amid heat, and calm amid storm, was sublime. It crowned the character of the hero that he was; it made him always invincible, and beautifully illustrated Solo-

mon's estimate of the grandest style of heroic character, "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he that ruleth his own spirit, than he that taketh a city." At one time, while lecturing, a shower of eggs was hurled at him. Pausing a few moments, with one eye badly hurt, his face and hair dripping with the slimy missiles, he looked round smiling, and humorously said, "Well, boys, I'm fond of eggs, but really I would like to have them done up in a little different style. Maybe, in the haste of your generosity, you did not think of that." At this the mob shouted, and made no further disturbance while he proceeded with his lecture. On another occasion in Madison county (of which Alton is the chief town), while lecturing, a ruffian leaped upon the platform, seized him by the cravat, and presented a pistol. The miscreant quailed under the fearless bearing and piercing eye of his intended victim, and the pistol dropped from his unnerved hand to the floor.

The subjects discussed in the course of lectures for this second tour of Illinois, we find on a placard advertisement, as follows:

1. Slavery — its nature and crime.
2. The brand it leaves on master and slave.
3. Its relation to the Federal Government.
4. Its control of the Federal Government, and its encroachments upon liberty.
5. It thwarts the great ends of good government, impoverishes soil, prevents invention, degrades labor, corrupts morals, and tends to national insecurity and bankruptcy.
6. A comparison of the prosperity of the slave States with that of the free States, in all the elements that make a prosperous people.
7. The colored race, its capacity and destiny.
8. The struggle between slavery and liberty — natural, necessary, *mortal*; and there can be no release in this war!

His work was never a burden. To preach and talk of the fundamental principles of liberty and their applications, seemed the spontaneous outcome of his simple-hearted affection for truth and his genuine love of doing good, without a selfish thought of reward. Though often exhausted by prolonged speaking, he had the rare faculty of dropping his load of responsibility, and joining in hilarious sports with the boys, or entering into the social enjoyments of the family circle. He

invariably attracted the young people, and in his intercourse they felt the elevation of his tone,—not painfully, as far above them, but from their own plane,—as he showed them the clear-cut path of real life. His supply of reading for the intervals of labor, was also a perennial resource for rest and refreshment. He was one of the earliest readers and admirers, in this country, of Thomas Carlyle, and Emerson's essays were his favorite companions. His colloquial powers were surprising. No one who met him socially could soon forget his frank, cordial greeting, nor the sunny, sparkling stream of his discourse. Any one—in mansion or cabin, whether a philosopher, or unlettered—would soon be spell-bound by his fascinating tongue; and the remembrance of the remarkable stranger would always be pleasant and refreshing, like "the charm of earliest birds."

He lost no time in idle rest, and especially enjoyed the Sunday labor for which he always planned, wherever the day of rest might find him—because through the religious element he might touch a tenderer chord, and produce a deeper conviction of truth. We find the following account of one of these extemporized Sunday meetings held in the grounds of the court-house in Morgan county (we quote from the *Morgan Journal*). After saying how much he had been prejudiced against Mr. Coddington's political positions (till on the day before he had heard them from his own lips), the writer says:

Nor could I associate religion with the court-house, where lawyers and politicians make their mercenary speeches—it had never occurred to me that a genuine Christian sermon could be preached in the shadow of this so-called "temple of justice." My prejudice was further deepened on learning that two of the ministers of our village had refused to read a notice of this discourse. But I had not listened five minutes before my prejudice had vanished. The fanning breeze, the overhanging branches, the silent attention of the audience, the deep fervor and devotion of the speaker, seemed to hallow the place as God's own temple of earth, sky, and beautiful foliage, while the very spirit of worship seemed infused in the air. Mr. Coddington read a passage from the Scripture, made a few simple explanations of it, and offered prayer. Then, as a text, he read the twentieth verse of the fourth chapter of John's first epistle, "For he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" He showed the nature of love to God and to men, and the duty of this love as binding on all his children, and growing out of the

relation of man to God, and of men to each other, as one human family — making the regard and justice shown by one man toward another the test and measure of his love to God, and the “fruits” by which the real Christian is known.

After burning this thought of brotherly love carried into the daily life, into the very souls of his hearers for nearly an hour, by the most forcible reasoning and apt illustration, he closed by showing vividly the contrast between a lifeless profession of religion and a practical obedience to the law of Christ, “All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them.” The whole discourse was one of great power and eloquence. One good thing there certainly was, in this day’s worship in God’s great temple, people of all sects, and of none, came together, looked one another in the face, and heard the gospel of Christ, to go home feeling that the sectarian wall was not half so high as before.

In January, 1846, two members of the executive committee of the Illinois State Anti-Slavery Society — Isaac Preston and R. P. Derickson — issued a call for a convention of the Liberty Party, to be held at St. Charles, Kane county, by letters of invitation, as follows: “Firmly believing that the time has arrived when, by prompt, judicious, and energetic action on our part, an Anti-Slavery member may be returned to Congress from this Congressional district, we earnestly invite you to meet with us, and take such action as in your judgment may be best, etc.” These were written by Miss Julia Preston, and addressed to every known Anti-Slavery man in the district, and to many outside its boundary. It was answered by an almost unanimous attendance at the convention held in March, which was enthusiastic and spirited beyond the hopes of even its projectors. John M. Wilson was its president. James H. Collins was first nominated as representative in Congress, but positively declined. The convention then favored the nomination of Mr. Coddington; but some of his friends strenuously opposed it, believing that, as a candidate, his usefulness as a lecturer would be restricted. — that his vocation was that of an orator, to instruct the people in their moral and political duties. Owen Lovejoy was then most cordially nominated, and was before the people as a candidate, till his election by the Republican party in 1856.

In 1846 Mr. Coddington became a resident of Wisconsin, where he remained nearly three years, serving the cause of human

welfare by presenting the issues of the "irrepressible conflict" between truth and error, liberty and slavery, God and all evil powers; by preaching and lecturing; also establishing the *American Freeman*, of Prairieville (later Waukesha), the first anti-slavery paper in that Territory. In 1848, he was tendered an election as United States senator, but declined, saying "It would interfere with his mission;" and it was largely through his influence that Charles Durkee became the choice of the same legislature in his stead. In 1849, he returned to Illinois and retraversed the State, speaking in every county-seat, and in all the larger towns, to audiences frequently numbering thousands.

The rapid progress of events — the new and bold claim of the South that the constitution guaranteed the right to take slavery into the territories, and the denial of the power of Congress to prohibit it — had brought the whole subject of slavery before Congress and the people. Henceforth the Liberty party became the Free Soil party. The call for "Light, more light," came from all quarters, and every effort was redoubled to respond in due measure to the need. He spoke in every county and in all the larger towns of the State of Iowa. The influence of these tours can only be estimated by the steadily advancing increase of the sentiment and vote for freedom. It may be truly said that he did a great pioneer work in this cause, in Maine, Vermont, Connecticut, Wisconsin, Iowa, and Illinois. Late in 1853, Mr. Coddington returned to Connecticut. We quote the following from the *Hartford Republican*:

New Haven, June 6, 1854. — Mr. Editor: Our city was favored last evening with an address on the Slavery Question, from Mr. Coddington, of Illinois. He spoke in the Representative Hall: the house was crowded, many were unable to find seats. As an orator there are few men who surpass him. In power to thrill and stir an audience, there has been no man with us for a long time who could compare with him. His clarion notes ring in our ears, and will so long as we labor in the cause for which they were uttered. However, the most marked feature in Mr. Coddington's address was not his oratory, but the perfect mastery of the subject which he exhibited. He seemed fit indeed to talk to legislators. He first looked at the subject ethically; then at its growth as an institution in our country, and the purpose of our Fathers respecting it. He then touched upon the secret of the Slave Power; referring it to the arrogance which the system itself produced in the owners, and to the immense pecuniary interests at

stake; and in conclusion dwelt upon the present crisis. Though he touched upon so many phases of the subject he treated none of them meagrely, and I doubt if there was one in the house whom he failed to convince of the truth of every proposition he advocated. Whether all the voting will correspond, is another question. Would that we had more men like Mr. Coddington. Men who speak out boldly because God has given them hearts that cannot be still in the presence of great wrongs! and such men are to bear an important part in the long struggle before us.

In the *Free West* of Chicago, July 20, 1854, we find the following:

MR. CODDING.

This old and favorite advocate of free principles has returned to Illinois. He has spent the winter and spring in Connecticut, where he has aided materially by his eloquence and counsel the success of the Anti-Nebraska Party and the election of Francis Gillette to the United States senate. Connecticut has recently passed a bill for the protection of fugitives from slavery upon her soil, as well as resolutions and acts repudiating the Nebraska Swindle. These were forwarded in their early stages by the efforts of Mr. Coddington, while laboring in New Haven, and addressing on various occasions meetings composed of members of the legislature.

In the fall of this year (1854) he made his great reply to Stephen A. Douglas on the Kansas-Nebraska bill and the extension of slavery, in Joliet, Geneva, and other places, just following the speech to which he replied. It is not possible to summarize the points of this speech (for this would be to reproduce the whole discussion), but it will be well remembered that he exposed, in the light of truth and of facts, the sophistries of Douglas, with characteristic clearness and power; and this was proved by its practical results on the popular vote. Although Douglas was returned to the senate by the flagrant apportionment of the state, the popular majority for Lincoln was 4,065. In 1860, Mr. Coddington published a "Republican manual" for the campaign (Lincoln and Hamlin), which he revised and adapted to the campaign of 1864 (Lincoln and Johnson)—endorsed by J. F. Farnsworth, I. N. Arnold, Owen Lovejoy, J. H. Bryant, and Hon. Joshua R. Giddings, as "covering the whole Republican argument." It was widely circulated, and served an important use in the canvass.

During the period of the War of Secession, he was if possi-

ble more alive and active than ever. No man watched with keener solicitude or comprehension its shifting drama, or did more in private life to give it a successful issue. In Wisconsin, Iowa, and Illinois he addressed the people in all the larger towns, often speaking six successive evenings on the great principles involved in the war, and stimulating the spirit of patriotic heroism. From his speech at Baraboo, on the Fourth of July, 1863, before a vast concourse of people in the open air, we extract a few passages: ¹

¹ The full text of this speech is given in the Baraboo (Wis.) *Republic*, July 22, 1863:

Mr. President and fellow citizens:—The circumstances under which we meet to-day are peculiar and very trying. They exclude from our minds all temptations to self adulation and vainglory. We are in no mood to-day to listen with self-complacency to a high-sounding rhetoric, lauding to the skies the old Declaration as an incomparable statement of unmeaning abstractions and “glittering generalities.” No, no! The fiery ordeal through which we are now passing has brought us *en rapport* with the very spirit of Jefferson when he penned it; and that of the Fathers, when they adopted it; and of the Revolutionary army, when they defended it in a baptism of blood. To-day as we hear it read, it seems a note sent forth from the divine harmonies — an inspiration, a political evangel, the very voice of God. Its proclamation was an epoch,—it opened a new career; it was the great era in political history.

The American historian, George Bancroft, a noble and life-long democrat, speaking of this wonderful document, says: “The bill of rights which it [the Declaration] promulgates, is of rights that are older than human constitutions, and spring from the eternal justice that is older than the state. * * * Two political theories divide the world. One founded the commonwealth on reasons of state — the policy of expediency; the other on the immutable principles of morals. The new republic, as it took its place among the powers of the world, proclaimed its faith in the truth and reality and unchangeableness of freedom, virtue, and right. The heart of Jefferson in writing the Declaration, and of Congress in adopting it, beat for all humanity. This assertion of rights was made for the entire world of mankind, and all coming generations, without any exceptions whatever; for the proposition which admits of exceptions cannot be self-evident.” There had been other republics attempted on the ground that some men are equal, that the well to do and aristocratic classes are all equal; but never before had the divine word, “*all men are created equal*,” fallen from the lips of a whole people, as the ground on which they assert their own independence, and on which they propose to build a government. But, alas

He lived to see this object of his life-long labor realized. When he departed he left no chattel slave behind him.

The death of Owen Lovejoy, in March, 1864, produced a profound impression upon the whole country. Mr. Coddling was deeply moved by that event. A correspondent of the *Boston Commonwealth*, who was present at the funeral service held at Princeton, Bureau county, Illinois (the home of Lovejoy), writes to that paper, under the date of August 23, 1875:

Dr. Edward Beecher preached the sermon. But there was a tall, comely, bowed form beside Mr. Beecher in the pulpit, whose silent presence was more than any sermon, and that man was the Rev. Ichabod Coddling. The funeral was in the morning. In the afternoon, the distinguished statesmen and orators from Washington and other parts of the United States eulogized, in rich language, the character of Mr. Lovejoy. But the deep sympathies of the people were not reached till Mr. Coddling spoke. Bowed in sorrow, the dark-hued, black-haired, eagle-eyed Westerner passed up the aisle. There was a hush, and soon the indefinable magne-

for us! we could not hold this sublime position, and in rigid justice make an application of this great idea. * * *

We have had a great educational history and we are now passing the graduating degree,—a fearful ordeal, a baptism of fire and blood. If we stand this test, we shall make liberty “organic and permanent” on this continent, and shall lay the “foundations of many generations, shall be the builders of the old waste places, the restorers of paths to dwell in.” This thought is significant, and calls to mind the truth that the *Union* party, the war party, is the party of 1776, and has evinced the ancient faith; and now that a constitutional way is open and a great necessity is upon us, we propose to make Liberty organic and perpetual. * * * *Our national judgment-day has come!* the grand assize is set. From the four quarters of the globe, men are looking on. From the battlements of heaven, a mighty host, among whom in serried ranks stand our Revolutionary sires, are bending their anxious gaze upon our conflict. The judge of quick and dead, holding aloft in our midst the manacled negro, in a voice that penetrates the utmost bounds of civilization, and reverberates through the eternal ages, cries, “Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me.” The genii of Liberty, hovering still on poised wings over our dear native land, are almost ready to exclaim, “*Let us depart.*” But from the loyal heart of this great people, wells up one mighty prayer: “Stay,—oh, stay! ye beautiful representatives of the Divine Love, the Divine Justice, the Divine Humanity: for we pledge our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor to give to our native land Justice: to plant under these bending heavens one republican government. So help us God!”

tism of the true orator and great soul concentrated all eyes and all hearts. Increasing wonder lighted the faces of titled speakers, as they now beheld the man who had been known to them only as an Abolitionist. Mr. Coddington was about 50 years of age, was expelled from college in his youth because he would lecture on anti-slavery, was mobbed in both New England and the West; he had stood shoulder to shoulder with his life-long friend through all the dark days of the cause, and now his surcharged, glowing, over-flowing soul was equal to the occasion. The sympathies of the audience were met, when his vivid eloquence culminated in the question. "Will you give the black man his rights?" The quick response was in every soul.

From Mr. Coddington's address at the Owen Lovejoy memorial meeting held at Princeton, June 9, 1864, we quote the following, as equally appropriate as though it had been spoken of himself; it is obviously written out of his own experience. After speaking of different classes of great men,—military, scientific, etc.,—he said:

Owen Lovejoy belonged to the moral heroic type of great men. I have alluded to the unpopular and odious character of the cause espoused. Slaveholders, or their supple tools, were entrenched in nearly all the high or influential places of the government. Slaveholders, or their tools, controlled the great national religious bodies. The slavery spirit pervaded and poisoned our literature, both secular and religious. The American Tract Society, and the great missionary bodies, frowned upon the spirit of anti-slavery, and openly conciliated and petted the slaveholders and their interest. Efforts were made by the Home Missionary societies to starve anti-slavery preachers into submission to the spirit of the church, which was the spirit of concession to slavery. The handful of slaveholders possessed a capital of one billion, two hundred million dollars, in human bodies and human souls. The great staple of the South, cotton, so valuable in itself, had in addition a factitious importance, by filling the place of gold in paying our foreign debts. This linked the importers of foreign goods (who were principally in the free States) to the interests and spirit of the cotton growers.

The more prominent slaveholders had plenty of money and leisure. They made politics a profession, and did nothing else than study how to govern the nation in the interest of slavery. The wealthy among them imitated the aristocratic classes in Europe in the style and costliness of their costumes and equipages, and became in the hot season of the year, the "lions" at our Northern watering places, — giving shape and tone to what is called "high life" in the North, leavening all "uppertendom" with their hatred of Abolitionists and contempt for all free negroes. Bound together by one great interest, the three hundred thousand slaveholders

trailed at their triumphant chariot-wheels the two great political parties of the nation (a vast majority of whom were at the North), and poured, through all their leading Northern organs, the debauching influence of their doctrines.

From 1834 to '40, in the freest country under heaven, — whose constitution expressly guaranteed freedom of speech and of the press, and the right of petition, and all of whose State constitutions did the same, — it was highly doubtful whether men would be permitted to express their sentiments if adverse to slavery. Giddings is expelled from Congress, for presenting a set of resolutions that we all now believe, and which were inferable from the decisions of the United States supreme court. A desperate effort is made to expel the venerable and incorruptible John Quincy Adams. Mobs are rife all over our country. Garrison is led through the streets of Boston, with a rope around his neck, to be hung. Large sums of money are offered for the heads of anti-slavery men. Black laws multiply; and to crown all, "the voice of a brother's blood cries from the ground." A darkness that could be felt, seemed fast settling upon our country. The governor of New York — in reply to the official demands of the Southern States, to suppress all discussion of the slavery question at the North — said, in substance, that "if the mob violence with which the anti-slavery men were met, did not cool their ardor and stop the agitation, he should feel called upon to recommend laws to suppress such agitation." The governor of Massachusetts, Edward Everett, said in an official message, about the time of the murder of Lovejoy, that, "in the estimation of eminent jurists, the anti-slavery men were guilty of a high misdemeanor and were indictable at common law." This was previous to any political action on the part of the Abolitionists, and had reference to the discussion of slavery as a great moral evil.

The demon of slavery was omnipresent, influencing every mind, controlling every thing.

The question was forced upon us with terrible significance, "Shall freedom of speech and of the press, and the right of petition, be taken away? Shall the last citadel of republican liberty be surrendered, and her watch-fires be extinguished, on all our hills and in all our Northern vales? Shall the spirit of God — the spirit of love, of liberty, of humanity — be insulted, and we be dumb, the slaves of slaves?" A divinely prepared few said, with the full meaning of the word, "No!"

It was one of those crises when God inspires men in different parts of the world with the same grand principles and the same holy motives. So under his supreme guidance, this little band went forth in the martyr spirit, from conquering to conquest. History will record that God by them saved the country, and the cause of republican liberty throughout the world, from being put back two hundred years. Conspicuous among these was Owen Lovejoy, a young man, assailed on the one hand by friendly re-

monstrance, and on the other by mob violence. Poor, with fines, imprisonments, and more poverty in prospect, he rose to those sublime heights, where all is light, serenity, and harmony; lighted his torch at heaven's own fires; and, Pallas-like, leaped forth with a war-shout, full-grown and armed for the conflict. The great Soul of All flowed into our brother, saying, "Say not, 'I am a child,' for I am with thee; gird up thy loins like a man, and speak all I command thee. Be not afraid of men's faces, for I will make thee a defended city, a column of steel, and walls of brass. Speak then against the whole land of sinners — against the kings thereof, the princes thereof, its people and its priests. They may fight against thee, but they shall not prevail, for I am with thee."

This quotation is extended beyond our first design, in order to show the moral grandeur of the position they alike chose, in early manhood, in full view and with full comprehension of all it implied. The love of God and of humanity found in each the same spirit of devotion to the cause of the dumb and the oppressed; the same unwavering faith led each to show forth that love with equal courage and constancy, to their life's end.

Then to side with Truth is noble when we share her wretched crust,
'Ere her cause brings fame and profit; and 'tis prosperous to be just.
Then it is the brave man chooses, while the coward stands aside,
Doubting in his abject spirit till his lord is crucified,
And the multitude make virtue of the faith they once denied.

Of Mr. Coddington's work as a Christian minister, we may say that his stated ministerial labors extended over a period of many years — at Lockport, Joliet, Princeton, Buda, Tiskilwa, and Bloomington, Illinois; in Iowa City, Iowa; at Waukesha, Fond du Lac, Delton, Kilbourn, Reedsburg, and Baraboo, in Wisconsin. It was in this relation of pastor that he drew out most deeply and warmly the affections of the people. Those who knew him best loved him most — loved him as a friend, companion, and teacher. They cherish his words, and his influence upon them, as most salutary and precious.

In his reading of Scripture, the very light of Heaven seemed to beam through and shine upon the Word, so that it came to the mind full of spirit and life; and in prayer he led the assembly to realize the depths of the divine love and the good of a life of obedience to the divine commands. He taught that the test of Christianity is charity, often quoting these words, "By this shall all know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to

another." He gave no place to hardness or bitterness of feeling toward any, though his slanderers and persecutors were not few. He recognized, as of the church and kingdom of the Lord, every heartfelt prayer to God, every kind thought for others, and every faithful step in obedience to his commands, in whomsoever it might be found.

His strong common-sense, his utter sincerity, courage, and faith, with the discipline of his life of struggle with the powers of evil, made him free and fearless in the investigation of truth, and he loved it in all its applications to human life and destiny. Doubtless, this characteristic love of truth and free thought followed him into the domain of theological inquiry, and rendered him somewhat unobservant of ecclesiastical decrees and formulas; but his devout reverence toward God and his Word, his life of faith and prayer, exemplified by disinterested service for the lowly, the friendless, and the oppressed, attest his genuine character. He was fond of philosophical study; was familiar with the representative minds of this century; and although he had scarcely begun a careful reading of Swedenborg, his sermons and religious lectures bore marked traces of the doctrines of the New Church, which will be readily recognized in the following subjects, which we find on a placard advertisement of a course of lectures:

1. Religion without humanity, not the Christian religion.
2. Christian salvation is salvation from sin, not merely from its penalties; or, "What must I do to be saved?" "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments."
3. Heaven and hell not localities, but states of the heart or affections.
4. God erects no barrier between himself and the human soul, in any world.
5. The simple fact of a natural death effects no change in the man's character.
6. The rational argument against the popular view of the resurrection of the body.
7. The rational and Scriptural view of the resurrection of the dead.
8. Miracles — supersensuous, not supernatural exhibitions of the divine power: *above*, not *contrary* to, Nature.
9. The law of God never suspends its penalties, nor the love of God its benedictions.
10. Obedience the safeguard of investigation. "If any man will do his will he shall know of the doctrine."

His opposition to chattel slavery was a natural foundation for his advocacy of mental and spiritual freedom — freedom not to give rein to lust and license, but as an essential condition of spiritual life and growth. His power in presenting this need of the mind, intensified the suspicions of his clerical brethren; for though he had been Congregationally ordained in Waukesha in 1846, he was from the first regarded by them with distrust, as unsound in the faith and untrustworthy as a spiritual teacher and guide. The feeling of many of them was very bitter and denunciatory, and the treatment he received from them — which he felt to be so undeserved and cruel — stung him to the heart; and it may be ranked (though done with more refinement) as arising from the same spirit as that expressed in the Rushville (Schuyler county, Ill.) *Times* of June 27, 1866, as follows:

We are pleased to observe that Ichabod Coddington is dead. He is the same contemptible Abolitionist preacher who, some years ago, trampled the American flag under his feet, and who always used the pulpit as a political rostrum. We are glad he is gone. It is right he should have died, or he would not have been called home. The murderers of civil liberty, the enemies of the white man, the instigators of the late war, are being called from earth. Lincoln, Brough, Henry Winter Davis, Coddington, and a whole list of others equally infamous, are gone, and the country is better off without them.

But his feeling toward them was often expressed by him in the words of the prayer of the martyr Stephen, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." With true Christian charity, he realized their state and their temptations, and earnestly wrought on in the field set before him, confident in the promise, "Every plant which my Heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up."

In private life, Mr. Coddington was above reproach, eminently courteous, and social. He was a devoted husband, and, as a father, most tender and solicitous for the highest welfare of his children. His frequent and sometimes prolonged absence from home was made up in part by most charming letters to them; and his home correspondence would fill an interesting volume. We quote from a memorial of Mr. Coddington, written by Francis Gillette (of Hartford, Conn.), July, 1866:

Over the character of the stern and inflexible reformer, a child-like simplicity threw a softening grace and beauty. He was but "a child of larger

growth,"—buoyant, ingenuous, sincere, hearty, trustful. He delighted most of all in the society of children,—entered into their sports and jollities with the keenest zest; frolicked, romped, and laughed with them; and was always welcomed to their pastimes as a most loved and genial playmate. Like the sword of Orlando, his trenchant blade, which cleaved giants, became soft as a silken streamer when it touched a child. This charming simplicity and freshness, characterized the man everywhere—on the platform, in the pulpit, and in the social circle. They were the constant outflow of his large, loving heart. Possessing a portly and commanding person: an eye through which the soul flashed its beautiful light: a voice full, rich, and musical: a manner and elocution, spontaneous and pleasing: it was a joy, an exhilaration, to see him rise to the grandeur of his great themes, and listen to his entrancing eloquence.

In his words of highest inspiration, his countenance glowed with a transfiguring radiance. He seemed the impersonation of truth battling falsehood, of justice rebuking wrong, of honor chastising meanness, of liberty frowning upon oppression—of humanity herself invoking heaven and earth to her rescue. He swept the chords of the human heart, with a master-hand: indignation or pity, joy or grief, laughter or tears, alternated at his will. His power lay in links of logic welded together by the fires of the heart. His paramount aim was to convince the understanding, and inform the judgment. He was always entertaining; wit played along his brilliant track, anecdote enlivened the sombre parts of his discourse, and satire now and then emitted its lightning shaft. He thought lightly of money: and of the little that fell into his hands he gave freely. He had no vulgar ambition, choosing rather to be a humble toiler in the master's vineyard, than to bind upon his brow the wreath of fame. He was one of those grand, royal souls, "framed in the prodigality of nature," which bore all over it the stamp of nobility—"a combination and a form indeed, whereon every God did seem to set his seal, to give the world assurance of a man."

In May, a few weeks before he was called to depart, in his last conversation with his sister, he said, in referring to his life, labors, and experiences: "Yes, if I could have put my conscience in my pocket, my worldly standing would be quite different. But I would not have it otherwise. I know I have done some good. If I travel by railroad, or attend public gatherings, invariably some stranger comes to me and takes my hand, saying, 'You don't know me, but words of truth from your lips [naming time and place] changed the whole course of my life, and I must express my gratitude.' Yes, it pays. I have sown the seed. It will bring forth fruit."

On the 27th of May, 1866, Mr. Coddington left Bloomington, where he was staidly preaching in the Unitarian church, for Baraboo, Wisconsin, to move his family to the former place. When he reached home he was very ill; gastric fever followed, which terminated his life on the 17th of June. His last words were in beautiful harmony with his noble life: "God reigns; it is all right; there can be no failure." And soon after, raising his hands with great effort, he laid them on the heads of his four little children, bade his beloved wife "farewell," and, with the coming glory shining in his eyes, he whispered, "All sweet,—all blessed!"

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